

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC (WATTENBERG)

SUBJECT: AMSPEC BEN WATTENBERG PROGRAMS IN HELSINKI

REF: STATE 256149

1. ALTHOUGH U.S. AUTHOR BEN WATTENBERG HAD TIME FOR ONLY A ONE EVENING STOPOVER (NOVEMBER 5) IN HELSINKI ENROUTE FROM LENINGRAD TO LUXEMBOURG, HE TOOK PART IN TWO POST-ORGANIZED PROGRAMS AIMED AT PRESENTING NEW INFORMATION ON U.S. SOCIAL PROGRESS TO BOTH A NATIONWIDE AUDIENCE AND SELECTED TOP GOVERNMENTAL AND MEDIA LEADERS. WATTENBERG'S PERFORMANCE IN BOTH PROGRAMS WAS VERY EFFECTIVE AND THERE IS NOW A GOOD CHANCE THAT HIS BOOK: "THE REAL AMERICA," WILL BE PUBLISHED IN FINNISH.

2. THROUGH ADVANCE DISTRIBUTION OF HIS BOOK, THE POST WAS ABLE TO INTEREST TELEVISION 2 IN DOING AN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH WATTENBERG BASED ON THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCLUSIONS IN HIS BOOK. PEKKA HOLOPAINEN, DIRECTOR OF ONE OF THE MOST WELL-KNOWN TV SHOWS IN FINLAND, SPENT 35 MINUTES DOING A TAPED INTERVIEW WITH WATTENBERG WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO BE USED AS ONE OF THE OPENING PROGRAMS COMMEMORATING THE 1975 BICENTENNIAL YEAR.

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3. FOLLOWING THE TV INTERVIEW, WATTENBERG JOINED 18 TOP FINNISH LEADERS FOR A BUFFET SUPPER AND FIRESIDE CHAT HOSTED BY THE AMBASSADOR AT WHICH HE GAVE A 30 MINUTE REVIEW OF HIS BOOK AND THEN SPENT THE REST OF THE EVENING DISCUSSING HIS FINDINGS AND U.S. IMAGE PROBLEMS TOGETHER WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND FINNISH GUESTS. PARTICIPANTS IN THIS PROGRAM INCLUDED FIVE WELL KNOWN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (TWO OF WHOM WERE RECENT CABINET MEMBERS); THE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER; THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF FINNISH RADIO AND TV; THE MANAGING EDITOR AND THE CHIEF FOREIGN COLUMNIST OF HELSINGIN SANOMAT (THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER); THE CHIEF EDITOR OF THE FINNISH NEWS SERVICE; THE HEAD OF SWEDISH TV PROGRAMS; THE SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OF THE FINNISH CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS; THE CHIEF EDITOR OF THE INTELLECTUAL MAGAZINE, KANAVA; THE PRODUCER OF TELEVISION 1'S CURRENT EVENTS PROGRAM; THE FOREIGN EDITOR OF HUFVUDSTADSBLADET (LARGEST SWEDISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER) AND A DIRECTOR OF OTAVA PUBLISHING COMPANY. LATTER WAS SO INTERESTED IN THE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION THAT HE HAS INVITED THE AMBASSADOR AND THE PAO TO COME OVER TO OTAVA TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING WATTENBERG'S BOOK AS A FINNISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE U.S. BICENTENNIAL.

4. POST IN NOW ENGAGED IN FOLLOW-UP DISTRIBUTION OF THE BOOK TO TOP GOVERNMENTAL AND MEDIA LEADERS AND THE AMBASSADOR HAS GIVEN AN AUTOGRAPHED COPY TO PRESIDENT KEKKONEN. AUSTAD

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